THE FIFTH DAY.

Friday, the 6th March 1931.

The Assembly met again at 11-30 A. M. on Friday, the 6th March 1931, the Dewan presiding.

73. A University for Kerala.

MR. M. K. GOVINDAN (*Municipal Council, Alwaye*) said that, in February 1913, the India Government made an important announcement regarding their educational policy, that as far as possible, separate Universities should be established in each of the important Provinces, so as to restrict the jurisdiction of the existing Indian Universities to the minimum area possible. As a result, there was a change in the educational policy of the Provincial Governments, especially in the control exercised over the Universities in their respective Provinces. Many new Universities, such as the Universities of Allahabad, Benares and Lucknow in North India and the Hyderabad University, the Mysore University, the Annamala University and the Andhra University came into existence as a result of it. The Travancore Government also did something in this direction. They appointed two University Committees, one in 1917 and the other in 1923, and the valuable reports submitted by the Committees were still under the consideration of the Government.

The Indian Education Commission of 1882 had expressed the opinion that Trivandrum was a fit place to be made the seat of a University. Dr. Mitchell, the late Director of Public Instruction, and Dewan Bahadur (now Sir) M. Krishnan Nair, when he was the Dewan of the State, had favoured the idea of establishing a separate University for Travancore. The University Committee was also strongly of opinion that a separate University for Kerala was very essential. Not only in the press and on the platform, but in the Legislative Council and in the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, it had been urged that as the existing educational system of the country was defective, it should be thoroughly revised to suit the present day requirements. But it was doubtful whether the practicability of the scheme had been carefully considered. The primary education and the high school education, over which the State had complete control were directed towards a single goal, *viz.*, the collegiate course, over which the Madras University exercised all control. Hence it was not possible to change the system of primary and high school education to suit the requirements and the ideals of the people of the country. So long as the State's educational policy was shaped and controlled by the Madras University, which had no stake in the country, there was no salvation. Those who were strongly advocating the reform of the system of education in the country should first try to remove our dependence on the Madras University.

The people of Travancore had no voice in shaping the educational policy of the Madras University. In the Senate, the Syndicate and the Academic Council, there were only very few Travancoreans. Travancoreans were not appointed in the institutions attached to the University. The Travancore students got no opportunity to attend the University Lectures nor were they benefited by the University Library maintained at a very heavy cost.

The establishment of a separate independent University for the State was essential to remove the educational disabilities suffered by the people and to enable the system being revised in conformity with the requirements of the country and the wishes of the people. There were separate Universities for the Urdu, Telugu and Canarese languages. It was a pity that the sister language Malayalam alone had no University of its own. The Government should take immediate steps for the establishment of an All-Kerala University, including the Malayalam speaking countries of Cochin and Malabar. There might be some difficulty about the place of location of the University. Trivandrum would be the best place; but if Cochin and Malabar were to insist on a more central place, Alwaye could be chosen for it.

A committee should be appointed to investigate into the respective rights and duties of the three Governments, *viz.*, the Travancore, Cochin and Madras, in the matter of the All-Kerala University. The committee should also be empowered to start the preliminary works connected with the establishment of the proposed University.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Govindan. You know that some time ago a committee was appointed to consider the question of the establishment of a University for the State and that that committee has submitted its report. Government have that report under consideration; and as circumstances, financial and other, permit, the matter will certainly be taken up.

74. Elementary Education.

MR. M. GOVINDAN (*Nominated*) said that it was 114 years ago, at the time of Her Highness Rani Gouri Parvathi Bhai, that Government recognised its duty to impart public instruction to its subjects. But for more than three-fourths of a century, education was confined to a few classes, more than 60 per cent. of the population being denied admission to the schools, on the ground of caste disabilities, with the result that these communities fell behind so far that, even after the schools were opened to their children also, they still remained backward in point of education. The Census figures of 1921, showing the number of illiterates in the State, showed the poor results of the educational efforts of both the Government and of the private recognised institutions for over a century. Of the total population of the State, excluding children under 5 years, only 27·9 per cent. were literate, the remaining 72 per cent. or roughly three-fourths of the population still remaining illiterate. In Ceylon, Burma and Maldives the rate of literacy notes